TUEBOR

We Will Protect

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Achieving Balance In Law Enforcement Training Philosophy

What do ideas mean when applied to living? Most people today can muddle along with contradictions in their thinking, surviving on the brains of their betters. However, when living on the edge of survival, as police often do, true ideas are life-giving. Irrational ideas can mean someone's death. Philosophy matters!

While a variety of philosophies and standards have been used by law enforcement trainers, most have been justified only by an explanation of the objective. However, certain ethical issues, such as police use of force and community problem solving, have recently created a debate in regard to the long-term effects of different training rationales.

The Missing Middle

Unfortunately, the training philosophy debate has been influenced by the extremist trends of our modern society. Two polarized groups have emerged, one holding to a conservative, stress based physical-emotional or *paramilitary* style, the other disposing to a more liberal, analytic and logical or *academic* approach. The irony in this argument is that both sides care a great deal about achieving the same objective—protection of the public. To achieve a resolution, perhaps the best place to start would be to examine the human mandate for law enforcement. Consider the following quote:

...on their historical journey...what men desired of their world was law and order; what they saw all around them, and ardently hated, was instability, debased values, and endless struggle.

Alasdair MacIntyre
After Virtue

In this statement, Alasdair MacIntyre, one of the foremost philosophers of our age, describes "law and order" as humankind's greatest desire. In this struggle, however, the cure has often been as terrible as the disease. John Locke, the philosopher who perhaps most inspired the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States, warned that despite their hatred of *chaos*, people would prefer anarchy to a harsh oppressive *control* (the degradation of the Soviet Union has proven this).

The dichotomy between chaos and control has manifested itself throughout history in government's attempt to find a balance between individual *freedom* and interpersonal *duty*. This dichotomy is directly related to the law enforcement philosophy debate between academic instruction, which supports free and unobtrusive learning, and paramilitary training, which seeks to change character and instill a sense of duty.

If the political ideal is a *balance* between freedom and duty, then perhaps a philosophic blend that balances academic and paramilitary training is the best way to develop a professional police officer. Academic, to promote openness and progress, and paramilitary, to inspire devotion and culture. This article will attempt to find this "missing middle" by showing some of the current ideas on what a "balanced" law enforcement training philosophy is like. In doing so, some of the "extremist" mistakes of both the paramilitary and academic fields will be emphasized.

Officer Safety *and* Self-Restraint

For officer safety reasons, training instructors have long opted for stress based, "paramilitary," defensive tactics training. They argue that it more closely recreates the physical and emotional strain that an officer might experience in real life. The goal is to toughen the officer so he doesn't lose control and succumb to what is commonly called hypervigilance —a stress induced reaction to danger that often manifests itself in an officer as over-aggressiveness, freezing-up, or outright avoidance of dangerous situations.

However, instructors that exaggerate paramilitary training in a way that overemphasizes the threat of danger can actually work against self-control and train to induce hypervigilance. Too many training programs have some officers believing that their work is one continuous tactical exercise. In the book *Police Violence*, James J. Fyfe explains the need for "balanced" police training that simulates *all* the actual working conditions of the department and community that the officer will be working in. In other words, training must reflect not only those worst case scenarios that might happen, but also the numerous "routine" situations that can also cause stress.

Training must not make matters worse by creating a sense of paranoia among officers. Says Fyfe,

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"The more difficult problem here is to get officers to deal with routine but potentially violent incidents as skillfully as police have learned to handle hostage situations…how to plan and coordinate approaches to potential violence is more complex and tougher to teach than the skills of ducking, drawing, and shooting."

Fyfe emphasizes that training be ongoing, and that it should also address off-duty conduct. He suggests limiting the use of interactive videos and other training methods that put emphasis on the "final frame"—focusing on whether the officer was in danger *at the instant* he or she employs force and obscuring the important question of whether the officer's actions contributed to the danger from which they subsequently had to forcibly extract themselves. Training should concentrate on the officer's performance, rather than on the pseudo-outcome of the scenario. To do otherwise is to overlook inappropriate conduct that could result in a real disaster on the street.

Fyfe concludes that the controlling factor between training and police use of force is the departmental philosophy behind the training. In fact, a study of police shootings, among fifty-one Los Angeles County police departments, found that the major determinants of their shooting rates were not their communities' level of crime and violence, but the personal philosophies and policies, written or otherwise, of their leaders. In short, Fyfe says: "police departments vary in their tolerance of the use of force by officers, and to the extent that formal training reflects these variations, it affects officers' decisions to engage in force."

Police Effectiveness *and* Respect of Rights

In their book *Practical Ideals for Managing in the Nineties: A Perspective*, law enforcement ethicists Edwin J. Delattre & Cornelius J. Behan describe a relatively recent phenomenon that has degraded America's trust in law enforcement, as well as demoralized its police officers:

"Many criminal justice personnel have betrayed the public, destroyed their careers, and devastated their families by persuading themselves that serving a good cause is a license to go beyond the law…"

While there are many individual reasons that police officers fall into a "keep the peace, *by any means*" disorder, a prevalent cause is an unhealthy organizational pressure to strive for results. In the case of law enforcement, this pressure came as a result of an "academic" philosophy developed for industrial management that penetrated government thinking at the turn of the 19th century, and that so overemphasized "utilitarian" efficiency that justice and fairness became secondary. (For related information, see the article "The Great Disruption" in the Fall 1999 Tuebor.)

It is interesting to note that the U.S. military was similarly corrupted by an "academically" designed industrial management philosophy during the Vietnam Conflict. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara (1961-1968), once President of Ford Motor Company, was appointed by President John F. Kennedy to bring "efficiency" to the military. According to Stanley Karnow, widely acknowledged historian and author of *Vietnam: A History*, "McNamara had been a brilliant corporation executive who could scan a balance sheet with unerring speed and skill." Unfortunately, McNamara stayed with his strength and approached the Vietnam situation like an industrial manager, totally preoccupied with "quantitative measurements."

McNamara's "zero-defects" micromanaging and mechanical measures proved totally inappropriate to matters of humanity. According to Karnow, statistics fail to convey "qualitative" or moral dimensions, much less offer solutions, and there is no way to calibrate for motivation, nor can computers be programmed to describe people's hopes and fears. Retired General H. Norman Schwarzkopf once referred to the Army's management model of the Vietnam era as "the stupidest [philosophy] you can possibly have when you're dealing with an organization full of human beings!"

A 1996 article by Army Chief of Staff General Dennis J. Reimer explains that "Few can afford integrity in a zero defects environment. Telling the truth ends careers quicker than making stupid mistakes or getting caught doing something wrong. I have seen many good officers slide into ethical compromise." To his credit, in his recent book *In Retrospect*, McNamara does confess that "We failed to recognize that in international affairs, as in other aspects of life, there may be problems for which there are no immediate solutions."

Like corporations, communist societies have a utilitarian mindset. Police officers under a totalitarian regime are expected to get the job done "by any means" because the "greater good" is considered more important than "individual rights." In such a society, government security is considered more important than freedom. Unfortunately, when police officers in a democratic society have their activity measured by industrial rules, like officers in a totalitarian government, they are forced into thinking that efficiency is more important than fairness.

Consider how police in a totalitarian society would resolve a hostage situation. They might try talking it out for a short time but, as we have often seen happen, they do not hesitate to take-out the terrorists, even if it means risking the lives of a couple of innocent hostages. Getting the terrorists and restoring order is more important than saving hostages.

Now consider how properly trained police in a democratic society handle a hostage situation. Police trained in the democratic principles of human dignity would readily volunteer to do just about anything to save an innocent hostage, no matter what the risk to their own lives. Saving the innocent is primary, getting the criminal is secondary. Both the communist police and democratic police are paramilitary, but the difference in their mindset is significant.

A police force that does not use its strength to maintain the rights of every citizen, and in particular of those who are the weakest, undermines the *trust* that is the very foundation of its existence. The emphasis that police in a democratic society place on protecting the innocent and preserving the rights of individuals is best portrayed in the artwork of Arnold Friberg.

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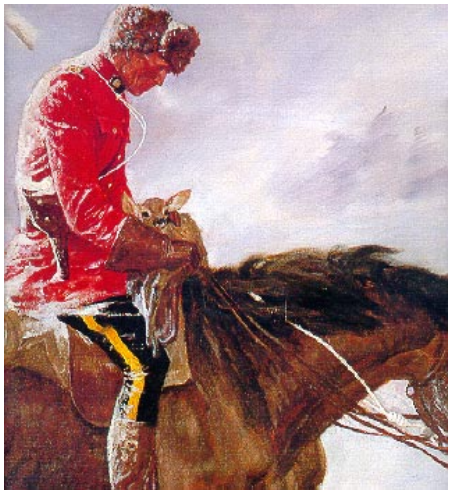


Painting Courtesy of the Potlatch Paper Company, Cloquet, Minnesota

Friberg made an entire collection devoted to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a law enforcement agency that has combined paramilitary training and academic learning and has earned a reputation for its caring, integrity, and trustworthiness. Pause for a moment to consider the Mountie, riding solemnly in a snowstorm, symbolically enduring all the harshness of life, all for the sake of a fawn—the vulnerable of the world.

Indoctrination *and* Individual Thinking

Solving law and order problems is what police work is all about, so problem solving ability needs to be addressed early on in police training, beginning with the basic school. General Colin Powell (ret.), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, explains why even this requires a mix of paramilitary training and academic education:

"Our philosophy is that you only get back what you expect, and, if you start low, you'll end low. So we start high. We have the highest expectations and it rarely fails. We then impose discipline and standards. If there are no standards, there is no learning.

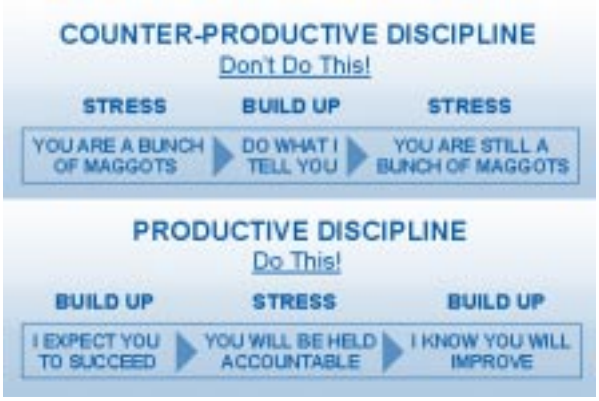
Training teaches skills. Education teaches you how to think. In both processes we do meaningful things; we do them to specific standards—high standards—and we evaluate rigorously. We don't waste time. It's too valuable. We know that people are betting their lives on other people's actions, so we emphasize responsibility and accountability. We motivate constantly, so constantly that, gradually, you are teaching others."

Powell emphasizes academic education to teach people "how to think." But he also speaks of "motivation," and imposing "discipline" and "standards" in the training process. Disciplining people to behave, and think, in certain ways may sound invasive. Some go so far as to call it "brainwashing." However, Chief Terry Mangan, of the Spokane Police Department, addresses this issue succinctly:

"We need not be afraid of pushing one belief system as opposed to another or valuing one culture over another if we make our place to stand on those basic principles and values upon which this nation was founded and which were incorporated into the very concepts set forth in documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. After all, when these young people stream into our agencies from every sort of family background and every race and creed and cultural formation, do we not ask all of them to stand together, raise their hands, and swear an oath to uphold that Constitution and all that it incorporates, and all that it stands for? Do we not expect them to serve as role models of good citizenship and, to the extent that we are able, to inspire and/or enforce it, to hold them to the highest standards of these principles in both their personal and professional lives?"

Obviously, police need to use a certain amount of "indoctrination" in order to produce a group of individuals who will conform to a higher standard of thought and action, *duty-bound* to solve problems in order to preserve *freedom*.

The reason that some police academies have failed in developing "problem-solving" officers is that they have modeled themselves on the wrong echelon of military training. If you compare police with the military, it is very apparent that a Police Training Academy should be more like an Officer Candidate School than a boot camp. In boot camp, young high school graduates learn self-discipline and how to take orders. In Officer Candidate School, adult college graduates and experienced non-commissioned officers learn how to make decisions. Since police officers are required to make critical decisions, and are held accountable for them, it becomes imperative that they be trained to the same level as an officer in the military.



To an outsider looking in, it may be hard to see the difference between the way the Army develops soldiers at Fort Jackson compared to the way they develop officers at Fort Benning, or the way new marines are developed at Paris Island compared to officer development at Quantico. But ask anyone who has experienced both and they will tell you there is a considerable difference. In a boot camp, a recruit can survive simply by obeying orders and enduring stress. In officer training, candidates are taught *lessons*, then they are given *responsibilities* so they can apply their learning, and they are measured by their problem solving and leadership abilities. If anyone thinks that police recruit training will get easier by changing the focus from "obeying orders" to "solving problems," think again. Just ask someone who's been through West Point and they will tell you that the stress induced from having to think for yourself is a lot more intense than having a drill sergeant bark orders at you.

Devotion to Duty *and* Ethics

James Fyfe reiterates that "The goals of police training go beyond the trans-

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mission of skills and techniques and the suppression of a few officers' hostile impulses. Police training also has an attitudinal component: it socializes officers into their departments and teaches them their employers' philosophies, values, and expectations." Law enforcement lecturer Bill Westfall warns that if you want your officers to behave Constitutionally, you need to give them a belief-system. In the midst of chaos and danger, virtue is a spiritual thing.

Fyfe and Westfall are supported by a recent U.S. Army report, *Values and Ethics: A Search for Consistency and Relevance*, written by Col. John W. Brinsfield. Brinsfield explains that the Army recently conducted its own study over the rivalry between academic ethics and paramilitary values. Brinsfield's research confirmed that "the principal effort to clarify ethos, character, and identity has been very recent." The report concluded "when the chips are down, there is no *rational calculation* [of academic ethics] in the world capable of causing an individual to lay down his life." This, says Brinsfield, is "an affair of the *heart*…dominated by such irrational factors as resolution and courage, honor and duty, and loyalty and sacrifice of self." While Brinsfield reinforces that a higher level can be achieved by including academics, he states "It is not wise to lose touch with the traditions of the profession in an effort to be purely 'neutral' in approaching matters of moral behavior."

In the book *The Brighter Side of Human Nature: Altruism and Empathy in Everyday Life*, author Alfie Kohn cites numerous studies which show that people who have rescued others, in the face of great personal risk, were generally distinguished by their childhood experiences with nurturant parents who modeled altruism. Says Kohn, "Almost all of the rescuers…identified strongly with at least one of their parents who served as a 'model of moral conduct.'"

Of course, police departments dream of recruiting only those people whose parents have instilled in them an intrinsic commitment to altruism and empathy. But since most people have only internalized varying degrees of caring and courage, Kohn says: "Those without such childhood experiences sometimes reach this same level of helping, but only if they are trained for [altruistic] work in a highly cohesive group." Fortunately, experience has shown that paramilitary training, properly employed, can provide the cohesive culture necessary to develop the higher virtues in people.

Unfortunately, too many basic academy instructors rely on pure assertion of power to discipline. According to Kohn, this elicits conformity in the short run, but will discourage genuine internalization of norms in the long run (just as citizens of totalitarian countries may continue to think subversive thoughts but will not express them out loud). The use of some power can serve to drive home the importance of a lesson, but emphasize punishment and "power becomes the lesson," and police recruits start to think that "might makes right."

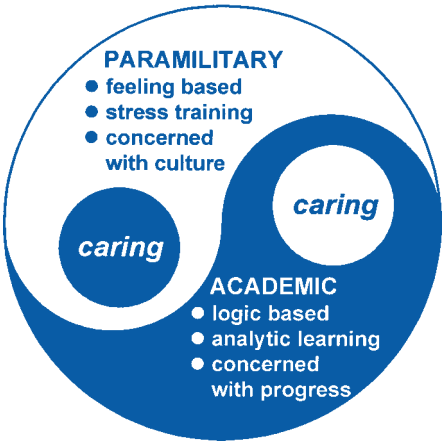
It may seem too obvious to bother noting, but instructors who model courtesy, restraint, and cooperation are more likely to develop police candidates with these values than are instructors who act as though they are in perpetual conflict with the recruits and abuse their authority to the end that the recruits always come out humiliated and defeated. Kohn states that group living, as in an academy, serves as an in-built mechanism for promoting concern for others, provided that cooperation is the essential experience and not in-group competition, which may actually serve to suppress generosity toward others.

The point is not just to discipline but also to explain, not just to praise but also to specify what virtues are expected and why. This means using open academic discussion to explain the intent of the training. Behavior is best affected in others by a *mentoring* instructor who will talk about their own moral dilemmas, and personal reactions to them, and is not afraid to show their own mistakes and vulnerabilities.

Dr. Dave Arnott, author of *Corporate Cults: The Insidious Lure of the All-Consuming Organization*, states there is nothing wrong with an organization that practices *high-standards* "culturization," as the military and police do, as long as they avoid cult-like hazings and intrusions on personal lives. Organizations should take efforts to emphasize to employees the importance of family and social involvements *outside* and *away* from the work environment. When police *choir practice* or group camaraderie takes precedence over family time, police have entered into a cult of their own making. One sign of a healthy organizational culture, says Arnott, is a little tension between labor and management. This indicates that employees have a sense of self, and the will to protect their interests.

Professions of all kinds, from businesses to non-profits, including many academics, have obviously come to appreciate the cultural lessons offered by a modified "military" model. Some of the most popular books in the management section of the local books store include: *Sun Tzu and the Art of War, Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun, Five-Star Leadership, The West Point Way of Leadership, Semper Fi: Business Leadership the Marine Corps Way*, and the list goes on.

The Salvation Army, which started in 1880 in the United States, attributes much of its success to using a modified military/academic model, emphasizing self-discipline and open discussion. In *Marching to Glory*, a book on its history by Edward McKinley, founders of the Salvation Army explain that this model helped them transcend racial and ethnic differences, organize and motivate followers, and naturally gratify the human desire to fight in a "great crusade…but bringing peace instead of war."



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Conclusion

There is good cause to balance paramilitary and academic police training philosophies. Experience shows that when either philosophy dominates it becomes an unhealthy extreme: paramilitary being too dogmatic, academic being too detached from real life. Of course, there will continue to be a debate on what the balance should be between these two philosophies—this should be encouraged. These two viewpoints act like a check-and-balance for each other. In the long run, however, they should mesh and work as one.

Consider the last response commonly heard from a police officer that performs an extraordinary act of bravery in order to help someone. Often they will say, "I didn't have time to think about it, I just had to do it," or "I wouldn't have been able to live if I hadn't tried to do something." What's striking is the apparent need to help, not because they were ordered to do it, but because there is a sense of *oneness* with the other, as if the other was a close friend or family member—even when the other might be a total stranger! This is the highest level of morality possible, a worldly sense of relationship, and it is something that American police officers have demonstrated so often that the public now expects it.

Fortunately, there is considerable agreement among law enforcement instructors on how character is developed. Principles need to be thought out and discussed in a "cool" academic setting, but then they must be validated, encoded, and stored through paramilitary training as an affectively "hot" emotion. Some say that police need "strong tactics and controlled emotions," but this is the same stuff that the Nazis preached in order to manipulate the German people. Kohn's research shows that without emotions to guide us, fairness flies out the window. W*hat we really need are police that have "strong feelings" controlled by "clear principles,"* this is what America has historically considered to be the "right stuff"—devotion to the democratic principles of freedom and duty. This is the philosophic balance that law enforcement training should strive for.

The Ethical Standing for Rest

Rest is Individual

Rest is the most individual of all responsibilities—it affects all ranks equally, and you can't delegate someone else to *sleep*, *relax*, or have *fun* for you. Not getting enough rest can cause such problems as: catastrophic operation failures of vehicles and weapons, impaired ethical perceptions leading to irrational or illegal conduct, and drained emotional and spiritual resources causing an unbalanced temperament and the loss of self control. All of these can result in impaired trust with fellow officers and the public. Long-accepted research has shown that no act of will, no moral passion, and no degree of training will preserve your ability to think if you are suffering from deprivation of rest.

Rest and the Police Officer

Shift work and 24-hour coverage is problematic for getting *quality* rest, but there are beneficial things you can do. When possible, work steady shifts instead of rotating shifts, keep consecutive days or nights worked to a minimum (which means foregoing overtime when it turns your month into one long shift), schedule court appearances and training dates so they coincide with your regular schedule, and take naps (20-30 minutes) which have been shown to significantly increase alertness and judgment. Oh, there's one other thing: manage your personal time. Avoid late night outings when you need to work the next day, exercise regularly, and have some fun!

Rest and the Police Commander

Part of the reason that police commanders are shorting themselves of rest is that law enforcement has become so uncompromising that it is bordering on "zero-defects" perfectionism. While it is part of a commander's common sense to take care of their troops, they often neglect to take care of themselves. Family members and fellow officers can help even the most workaholic of commanders if they remind them that to take care of their people, they must start with the self and work outward. It should be evident that this is not a call to create a "rank has its privileges" sloughing-off system. There will always be times when you have no choice but to push yourself, but these times will be easier if you don't push yourself past your limit each and every day.

Conclusion

Building rest into a personal routine, no less into our police culture, is going to require philosophic work. It is not rational to valorize sacrifice to the point that we create dangerous illusions, such as believing that "real tough guys" can go without sleep, or that the commander's crushing personal fatigue somehow translates into safety for the troops. Rest, for police, most readily acquires a positive ethical standing if it is strongly valued and supported by peers and superiors. Most of all, one needs to imagine an inner voice saying, "It's your duty to take care of yourself. If you fail to maintain yourself, I will feel you are letting me down!"

Tuebor is on the Web!

The Tuebor is now accessible, with Adobe Acrobat Reader, through the Michigan State Police Training Division Intranet site, or via the Internet at **www.msp.state.mi.us/division/academy**

Trust: An Inside-Out Prerequisite

Commentary by G. Patrick Gallagher

. . . The extensive treatment of "'The Great Disruption and the State of Society and Law Enforcement" which encompasses the Fall 1999 issue treats a subject that our personnel have to be cognizant of (along with many other ideas and trends) if they are going to become the leaders that we need for that new century staring us in the face. Let me share a couple of thoughts with you on the topic of trust, the trust that the public had in various professions. Unfortunately, police are now lumped with lawyers and politicians, and while these two groups did not go any lower, police fell dramatically—and funeral directors rose! As we make attempts to restore trust through Community Oriented Policing or its many variants, we readily admit we want to establish trust with our people. Yet, when we look at the manner in which many law enforcement organizations are run, when we examine the organizational climate in those departments, we find that there is little trust. Trust is minimal in the way we manage and supervise, in the manner in which we communicate, and in the way in which we act toward one another. My point is that members of organizations that do not have mutual trust internally, will find it extremely difficult, if well-nigh impossible to generate that trust externally, where we so desperately need it…I am convinced that we can only be brought along by organizations that are "value-guided" rather than "rule-driven."

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Muscle Cars and S.U.V.'s

"The Need for Physical Balance"

Most cops love cars! We love to drive them; we love to look at them. As the proud owners of cars, we go through great pains to make sure our cars are perfect, that the paint is waxed to a deep gloss, the interior is meticulously clean, and that the engine is tuned just right. The point is this, we want the "whole package."

When it comes to being police officers, we need the whole package as well. If a police officer's body could be compared to an automobile, then we would need to be SUV's (Sport Utility Vehicle), not a "muscle car" or "speedster." We can't allow ourselves to become a single purpose unit, good at just one thing—running, lifting, thinking, or whatever. Like an SUV, we need to be able to go just about anywhere, at any time, and not get stuck, run out of gas, or break down. Basically, a cop's body needs to be a multipurpose tool.

Yes, we spend most of our time behind the wheel, or writing an endless number of reports. But there are also the less frequently occurring *spikes* that raise the heart rate and challenge the mind; this is what gives us satisfaction, this is what makes us aspire to continue the job. But it is also these spikes in action, the part that we enjoy so much, that actually creates the greatest challenge to our health. It is unfortunate, but many of us do not stay physically fit enough to handle our body's reaction to exertion, stress, and excitement.

A banker from Florida recently recounted a story about a police officer that responded to the bank to take a female into custody for a check offense. The officer attempted to handcuff the female and she began to struggle. The struggle turned into a fight lasting several minutes, which the officer nearly lost. The banker commented on how four other officers ultimately responded to the scene, as well as two ambulances. The initial officer was treated for exhaustion and taken to the hospital with chest pains. The officer probably did not anticipate a struggle from the female, and he certainly would not have been physically prepared to handle a fight from anyone of a larger stature.

Each year 16 police officers die of heart attack while working. Who knows how many other officers have had heart attacks but were fortunate enough to survive? The point is, there may not always be a wrecker available to pull us out of a bad spot when we need help. There is a lot to be said for strength of a weight lifter, the endurance of the distance runner, and the cunning of a sharp mind. The concern is when we rely too much on only one of these, neglect another, or worse yet, ignore all three.

There are some people who have approached the yearly fitness test as a chore or a burden. But the voluntary physical fitness assessment was developed as a "Wellness Assessment" for your benefit. The event intentionally measures the *whole* body. The hope is to encourage all department members to prepare themselves physically, as a whole package.

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